



Family School Connection  
Bielefield Elementary School  
70 Maynard Road, Middletown, CT 06457

To Connecticut Legislators - I'm reaching out to you in response to the proposed budget cuts of \$2.3 million in funding (18%) to the Children's Trust Fund. These proposed cuts would completely eliminate funding for Family Empowerment, Family School Connection, and the Children's Law Center, as well as General Fund support for the Kinship Fund. I urge you to consider carefully the significant opportunity you have to ensure continued funding for these important programs, particularly as they serve school-aged children most at risk of failing to achieve their academic goals and grade level expectations.

The Family School Connection program has been implemented in Title I schools identified as in need of improvement in some of Connecticut's highest poverty school districts. What is the Family School Connection program?

**Family School Connection IS:**

- A scientific research-based program with nine years of empirical data DEMONSTRATING EFFECTIVENESS collected by the University of Hartford School of Social Research. In Middletown, 100% of the families have opted in to the research program, understanding that data-driven decision making is necessary to achieve student academic success.
- A home visiting program for families whose children are likely to be struggling with issues in school and at home.
- A prevention program for families whose children are frequently absent, truant, have academic or behavioral problems, or come to school unprepared to learn.
- A significant safety net for families with school-aged children that have arrived in the educational system without benefit of earlier prevention strategies.
- Making promising gains in attendance, behavior and student academic achievement!
- Helping to CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP!

**Family School Connection IS NOT:**

- A duplication of services! There are no other home visiting programs available to parents of school-aged children in Connecticut!
- An intervention program! The Family School Connection model is **a prevention program** that targets families that may be at risk for neglect and educational disengagement.

Please take this important opportunity to restore funding to these significant programs for our most at-risk children.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Elizabeth K. Nocera*  
Elizabeth K. Nocera  
Director of Grant Services  
Middletown Public Schools

# Interested in Closing the Achievement Gap?

## Support Family School Connection

### ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS AT HIGH RISK OF SCHOOL FAILURE

Family School Connection (FSC) provides home visiting services for families whose **children are frequently absent, truant, have academic or behavioral problems, or come to school unprepared**. In addition, the program provides services to parents who are not adequately engaged with their child's school or attending to their child's educational needs.

### WHO DOES IT SERVE?

FSC serves about 200 families with elementary school age children – largely between pre-K and third grade - every year. The families are mostly single head of households, have limited educations, high rates of unemployment and few resources. **More than one-third of the parents have less than a high school education.**

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Home visitors meet with the families on a regular basis – usually 2 to 3 times a month – for ten months or more. Home visitors help parents improve parenting skills, spend more time with their children, and make better connections with the school. The home visitors help the parents address the many issues that interfere with their ability to meet needs of their children. They help parents identify problems, develop plans and problem solving skills.

### PARTICIPATING PARENTS:

- SPEND MORE TIME HELPING THEIR CHILDREN WITH HOMEWORK AND LISTENING TO THEM READ.
- ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE INVOLVED WITH THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL AND EDUCATION.
- TAKE HOLD OF THEIR DEMANDS AS PARENTS AND MEET THE DEMANDS OF PARENTING.

### PARTICIPATING CHILDREN:

- MAKE PROMISING GAINS IN ATTENDANCE, BEHAVIOR OR ACADEMICS.

### THE PROGRAM IS LOCATED AT FIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS - PRE-K TO GRADE 12

- Betances in Hartford
- Bielefield School in Middletown
- Fair Haven School in New Haven
- Wequonnoc School in Norwich
- W.B. Sweeney School in Willimantic

Don't let the Governor eliminate funds for these critical services



### CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND COUNCIL

Family School Connection is a program of the Children's Trust Fund, a division of the Department of Social Services. The evaluation of the program was conducted by the University of Hartford Center for Social Research.